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Navy Surgeon General Honors Medical Corps Birthday

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By Vice Adm. Matthew Nathan, U.S. Navy surgeon general and chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery



Today we celebrate the 141st birthday of our Navy Medical Corps. We've come a long way since the Forty-First Congress enacted the Appropriations Act which established the Medical Corps as a separate entity and as a Staff Corps of the U.S. Navy back in 1871. While this action formalized our proud corps, the existence of Navy physicians, long pre-dates this Congressional Act. As they say, we've come a long way since.

I am understating it when I say that the Medical Corps' role has grown in complexity and value since 1871. Our people today perform from the sea, to the land to the

toughest environments that include missions across the spectrum of military missions – from kinetic warfare all the way to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions. Navy physicians serve from the sea to the battlefield all the way to the halls of Congress and the White House. They serve in the aviation and undersea medical communities, and as astronauts exploring the frontiers of space. The Navy Medical Corps continues to pave new frontiers in biomedical research, medical education and training, and patient care delivery at our clinics, hospitals, aboard our afloat platforms, and in combat theaters.

Our physicians, as well as the rest of the Navy Medicine family are deeply committed to the highest quality of care, and we will take every step possible to ensure we consistently meet those high standards. Our status with the American people and among those in the Navy and Marine Corps has never been higher. They recognize that you have met the mission, answered the bell and set the bar high. They recognize that you are part of a group of people that stand up when called and step forward when needed.

The Medical Corps' mission is of great value to our naval forces, their families and those who have worn the cloth of the nation. To the thousands of Active Duty Navy physicians and hundreds of Reserve-affiliated Medical Corps Officers, I want to convey my deep gratitude for your selfless service, your dedication and your sacrifice in order to accomplish the mission and serve those who serve. I am so proud to be your shipmate and it is my honor to serve with you.

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Navy Medicine is a global healthcare network of 63,000 Navy medical personnel around the world who provide high quality health care to more than one million eligible beneficiaries. Navy Medicine personnel deploy with Sailors and Marines worldwide, providing critical mission support aboard ship, in the air, under the sea and on the battlefield.

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